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ABSTRACT

Intended for those working with deaf blind children, the document discusses strategies for developing language. Information on objectives, materials, and methods are presented for 10 levels of language development: the nonresponsive child, the child with differentiated crying, the child who demonstrates "stimulus-response" behavior to situational cues, the child who pushes and pulls with situational cues, the child who pushes and pulls without situational cues, the child with inner language, the child who points and gestures, the child who uses signs, the child who uses preacademic language, and the child who uses academic language but has language problems. (CL)

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MANUAL FOR LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

A Handbook of Strategies for Teaching Children Whose Communicative Skills Range From Non-Responsiveness to Use of Academic Language

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Sponsored By

Mid-Atlantic-North and Caribbean Regional Center
for Services to Deaf-Blind Children

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PREFACE

Much has been written about language and acquisition of language by those with normal hearing as well as those who are significantly auditorily impaired. Teachers and others who were prepared traditionally to work with deaf and/or deaf-blind have been *by and large* limited to working successfully with children functioning at a higher level than many of the deaf-blind children currently enrolled in programs across the region. Guidelines to assist teachers develop communication skills in very low functioning children weren't readily available. The Regional Subcommittee on Curriculum, while reviewing various materials — curricula and program guides — with a view to preparing an annotated bibliography appropriate for use with deaf-blind, discovered the need for putting together in one single package a guideline delineating various levels of language acquisition on a developmental hierarchy. The proceedings of a language workshop conducted by the Regional Center on January 23 and 24, 1975, documented here in the pages to follow, reflect a modest beginning but a genuine effort of over one hundred workers of deaf-blind (teachers, speech therapists, psychologists, audiologists, educational counselors, and social workers, assisted by the Regional Deaf-Blind Center Staff) towards the achievement of this objective.

It is our sincere hope that the information presented here will assist the teachers and others working with deaf-blind in planning appropriate sequential activities at various levels of language development. We also hope the levels of language as described on a developmental hierarchy will provide some groundwork and thoughts for more extensive work in this, one of the most critical areas of development in a severely handicapped child. We will be most appreciative of any comments, additional information, or suggestions to improve the guidelines and the activities presented herein.

We are most grateful to those without whose hard work and contribution this presentation would not have been possible. Special recognition must be bestowed on those ten Group Leaders and Recorders who had the challenging task of bringing out the best from all who participated in the group discussion sessions. Needless to say that the generous offer and the hospitality of both Overbrook School for the Blind and the Upsal Day School, Philadelphia, where the workshop was held, cannot be overemphasized.

Finally, the Educational Specialist and the other Regional Staff who had the major task of putting the workshop as well as the proceedings of the workshop together should be highly commended.

Khogendra N. Das, Coordinator
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INTRODUCTION

The ten-level language development hierarchy offered here — perhaps unique in literature on language — was designed to provide a paradigm for developing communicative skills in handicapped children.

To use the manual most effectively the instructor should first familiarize himself with the ten levels described. The characteristics of learners at each level are delineated as well as techniques for assessing if the child is at a particular level, strategies to foster his advancement to higher levels and a general instructional objective for a learner functioning at the level.

Second, the instructor should estimate the level of communicative behavior of a particular learner with which he is concerned. He should refer to the characteristics and assessment techniques in the manual, if necessary, to determine the level of the child's most advanced communicative behaviors. (Children may have a repertoire of behaviors from several levels. Their highest level behaviors, however, have the most implications for educational planning.)

Once a child's highest level of communication is determined, the instructor may utilize the manual's strategies at that level for planning activities to advance his lanuage development skills. Due to tne varying composition of the groups of teachers who developed the strategies and to a wide range of learner abilities with which they were dealing, there is understandable variety in the format of each section. Regardless these are activities with which a large number of teachers have had success in improving the communicative skills of children with varying degrees of handicaps.

In order to plan instructional strategies for a learner at a particular level, the instructor must not only have a thorough understanding of that level, but also of the next higher level — the achievement of which, generally, is the intent of instruction. It is hoped that instructors using the manual will expand the strategies offered here and design others for meeting the unique needs of the individuals with whom they are concerned.

We would like to express special gratitude to Dr. Verna Hart. Dr. Hart's generous assistance was especially valuable in planning the workshop which resulted in this manual.

LEVEL I
THE NON-RESPONSIVE CHILD

The child who is functioning at Level I shows no voluntary response to stimulation of any sort. He does not pick up objects or even reach for them; he does not turn toward sound. He will not orient himself toward a visual stimulus, including light; nor does he demonstrate awareness of others; he demonstrates no affection and does not respond to it; he does not show comfort when picked up and does not cry if left alone.

In order to determine that a child is truly functioning at this level, each "sense" should be evaluated through the presentation of various stimuli.

The instructional goal for children at this level is for them to make voluntary responses to both pleasant and unpleasant stimuli.

STRATEGY NUMBER 1

Materials:	rough textured materials. For example: pot scrubber; sponge; brush; sandpaper.
Objective:	The child should respond by voluntarily moving away from an unpleasant stimulus
Teacher Procedure:	Hold the child in a comfortable position. Stimulate the child with the texture by moving it on his body. Manipulate the child to move away. The reinforcer is the taking away of the stimulus. Gradually withdraw the manipulation as the child becomes more responsive.

STRATEGY NUMBER 2

Materials:	Soft textures: fur, cotton balls; velour; nylon; baby oil; whipped cream.
Objective:	The child should reach for the stimulus of a soft texture.
Teacher Procedure:	Hold the child in a comfortable position. Stimulate the child with the texture by moving it on his body. Stop. The teacher then manipulates child's hand toward the stimulus. Continue stimulating the child as above. The reinforcer is the stimulus. Gradually reduce the amount of manipulation.

STRATEGY NUMBER 3

Materials:	vibrator, mat
Objective:	The child should hold the vibrator against his body.
Teacher Procedure:	Place the child in a comfortable position. Apply the vibrator to the child. Manipulate the child to touch the vibrator. The reinforcer is the holding of the vibrator. Gradually reduce the amount of manipulation as the child becomes more responsive.

STRATEGY NUMBER 4

Materials:	pepper, ammonia, onion, vinegar, garlic, etc.
Objective:	The child should pull his head back away from the smell (to withdraw)
Teacher Procedure:	Place the child in a comfortable position. Hold the smell for five seconds under the child's nose. The teacher should move the child's head away from the smell (remove smell). Reinforcer is the removal of the smell.

STRATEGY NUMBER 5

Materials:	perfume, allspice, shaving lotion, peppermint, room deodorizers, baby powders, etc.
Objective:	The child should move his head toward the smell.
Teacher Procedure:	Place the child in a comfortable position. Hold the smell for five seconds under the child's nose. The teacher then should move the child's head toward the smell. (Remove the smell.) Reinforcer is the smell.

STRATEGY NUMBER 6

Materials:	gross sounds; environmental sounds; school bell; buzzer; bang of door; siren, etc.
Objective:	The child will show response to the sound by moving toward it, moving his head, reaching out, and/or touching the source of the sound.
Teacher Procedure:	Place the child in a comfortable position. Ring a bell (or produce a sound) near the side of his ear. Manipulate his head to turn toward sound, reach out and/or touch the sound source. Reinforcer: Primary reinforcer (e.g. edible) followed by a secondary (e.g. praise.) Reduce the amount of manipulation as the child begins TO MOVE INDEPENDENTLY.

STRATEGY NUMBER 7

Materials:	**a blanket**
Objective:	**The child should remove the blanket from his head.**
Teacher Procedure:	**Hold the child in a comfortable position. Manipulate the child's arm to remove the blanket. Gradually reduce the amount of manipulation. Reinforcer is the light and the removal of the blanket.**

STRATEGY NUMBER 8

Materials:	**Brightly colored toy**
Objective:	**The child should reach toward the toy.**
Teacher Procedure:	**Teacher should hold the toy in front of the child; then she should manipulate the child's arms to touch the toy. Gradually withdraw the manipulation. Reinforce with a primary reinforcer.**

STRATEGY NUMBER 9

Materials:	**Bolster and mat**
Objective:	**The child should put his hand down on a mat as a protective action.**
Teacher Procedure:	**Teacher and child should co-actively sit on the bolster. Rock and extend the child's arm to maintain his balance. Use a primary edible reinforcer combined with catching balance as a reinforcer.**

STRATEGY NUMBER 10

Objective:	**By vocalizing, the child will respond to various stimuli (hunger, pain, etc.)**
Teacher Procedure:	**Reinforce random vocalizations (including crying) through the presentation of food, cuddling, changing diapers, etc. If consistently done, the child will learn that the vocalization will result in a pleasant experience (food, clean diapers, etc.)**

LEVEL II
THE CHILD WITH DIFFERENTIATED CRYING

The child functioning at Level II has a repertoire of crying behaviors which have different sounds and are highly correlated with certain stimuli. For example, the child will cry differently when he is hungry than when in pain; he will have a different cry yet when angry or frustrated. Although children functioning at higher levels may often communicate with differentiated cries, the child at Level II uses differentiated crying as his *only* method of communicating.

In determining if a child is functioning at Level II, the instructor should observe how the child indicates his desires. If crying is the only method observed, the instructor should describe each cry and its use.

The general instructional objective for the Level II child is for him to indicate his needs in ways other than crying.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Instructor:

1. will recognize and identify each differentiated cry.
2. will respond consistently to each cry.
3. will introduce a higher level response for each cry.
4. will reinforce appropriately and consistently.

The Child:

1. will respond consistently to each stimulus.
2. will substitute a higher level response to each particular stimulus.

STRATEGY NUMBER 1 (Feeding)

Objective: The child will open his mouth when presented with food.

Environment and Materials: Consistent use of same environment; chair, table, room; location of these utensils, bib; etc.

Instructor Behavior:

1. Child is made aware of the presence of food through any and/or all senses. (Allow him to see, smell, and/or touch it, etc.)

2. The adult will:
   a. reinforce with food the desired response when it occurs.

3. If the desired response does not spontaneously occur, the instructor will:
   a. touch the food to the child's lips and reward when mouth is open.
   b. encourage the child to imitate the adult stimulus (open mouth) and/or
   c. physically manipulate the child's mouth, and then reinforce.

STRATEGY NUMBER 2 (Pleasure)

Objective: The child will reach out when presented with a pleasurable stimulus (adult, toy, object.)

Environment and Materials: Stimuli correlated with cooing, laughing, giggling, smiling, etc.

Instructor Behavior:

1. Child is made aware of the presence of a pleasurable stimulus.

2. Reinforce the child when he makes an appropriate response (and reaches out).

3. If the child does not immediately respond:
   a. physically manipulate the child towards the object and reward with object/person.
   b. "bait" the child by utilizing reinforcement for gradually closer approximation to the goal behavior.
   c. provide a model for the child to imitate.

STRATEGY NUMBER 3 (Physical Discomfort to wet and/or soiled pants)

Objective: the child will pat himself in close proximity to the soiled area.

Instructor Behavior:

1. physically manipulate the child's hands to pat the soiled area.

2. the child is rewarded by removing the source of discomfort.

3. imitation and prompting can be used.

STRATEGY NUMBER 4 (Pain)

Objective: the child will cry in response to pain.

Instructor Behavior: the adult will reward the child's appropriate cry with comforting behavior.

STRATEGY NUMBER 5 (Attending)

Objective: Upon a request to do so the child will demonstrate a postural orientation toward the instructor for at least 30 seconds. This will involve sitting quietly, eye contact if sight is present, and head orientation for maximum auditory input.

Strategy:

Instructor should sit facing child and give the command, "Look at me." Wait. If the child does not, the instructor should move the child's head to the desired position. Gradually reduce the manipulation of the child's head. If necessary initially reinforce after only one (or a few) seconds of attending and gradually increase the amount of attending time necessary to earn the reinforcer.

Similar strategies could be utilized to achieve an appropriate response to "Look at this."

STRATEGY NUMBER 6 (Imitation)

Objective:

Upon perceiving the corresponding action on the part of a model, the learner will stand up; sit down; or touch his head, abdomen or foot.

Strategy:

One person (as a model) — possibly another child — should be seated "face-to face" to the learner, and the instructor should be seated behind the learner. The instructor should:

1. Instruct the learner to attend to the model.
2. Request the model to perform the desired action, e.g. touch his head.
3. Manipulate the learner to imitate the model.
4. Appropriately reinforce the learner.
5. Repeat the lesson frequently, gradually reducing the amount and degree of manipulation of the learner. For example, the instructor may initially move the learner's hands; later he could prompt the imitation by moving him from the elbow; and, later yet, by touching his shoulder.

   The learner has achieved the objective when he consistently imitates two or more of the model's actions.
6. As the learner progresses, develop similar objectives requiring imitation of finer movements, including oral positions, handshapes, and vocalizations.

LEVEL III
THE CHILD WHO DEMONSTRATES "STIMULUS-RESPONSE" BEHAVIOR TO SITUATIONAL CLUES

The child at Level III has simple responsive behaviors which consistently occur following particular stimuli, regardless of context. Such behaviors are reflexive in nature and apparently occur without thought, so to speak, on the child's part. They ordinarily are resultant from the frequent repetitious pairing of a stimulus with a patterned response. An example of a child demonstrating such a behavior is one who, when presented with a spoon, consistently brings it to his mouth, regardless of whether or not there is any food in sight. Other examples are the child who urinates when he comes into contact with a porcelain surface; the child who extends his arm (as in dressing) whenever a sweater-like object is presented; or the child who cries whenever he sees someone dressed in white (associated with a doctor or nurse.)

In determining that the behaviors which a particular child demonstrates are at this level, there are several criteria to be considered:

1. The behaviors are usually (but not always) related to basic needs.

2. They are reflexive in nature, and no indication is given of a reasoning or thought *process.* (Use caution here. The behaviors may appear as the result of a thought process, but careful analysis will reveal that they are reflexive in nature.)

3. They are usually simple, rather than complex, in nature.

4. Although the behaviors characteristic of Level III are less complex than those typically labeled "language," it can be said that this level reflects the beginning of receptive language.

The general instructional goal for the child at Level III is that he will communicate particular needs and/or desires by physically moving another person (or another person's hands) toward what is needed and/or desired.

STRATEGY NUMBER 1

Description of child:	Child has light perception.
Stimulus:	Penlight
Response:	Child stares at light and enjoys it.
Situation:	Classroom
Objective:	The child will manipulate the adult to get penlight off the shelf where it is usually kept.

Procedure:

1. At the usual time of day, on a daily basis, the teacher brings the child to the shelf where the penlight is kept.
2. The teacher picks up the penlight and takes the child and light back to a work table.
3. The teacher then presents the light source to the child to engage him.
4. The teacher takes the child and penlight and returns light to shelf.

STRATEGY NUMBER 2

Description of child: Child is blind and deaf.

Stimulus: tickling

Response: pleasure, laughing

Objective: The child will imitate activity of the teacher tickling him by placing the teacher's hands on his body.

Procedure:

1. The teacher places her hands on the child's ankles.
2. The teacher walks fingers up the child's legs and tickles.
3. The teacher repeats tickling activity in same way on a regular basis at an appropriate time (for example as a reward for task completed).

STRATEGY NUMBER 3

Description of Child: Child is totally deaf-blind who enjoys water.

Stimulus: sink faucet

Objective: The child will manipulate an adult to turn on a faucet for water.

Procedure:

1. At an appropriate time the child is taken to sink by his teacher.
2. The teacher stands behind child, hands over hands
3. Child's hand on faucet (cold water)
4. Child's other hand under spout.
5. The teacher turns faucet (hand over hand.)
6. Child feels water come out of spout and enjoys it.
7. Periodically the teacher can bring the child to the sink, hand of child brought to spout, other hand not brought to faucet. Child observed.

STRATEGY NUMBER 4

Description of Child: low functioning deaf-blind.

Stimulus: Child's favorite food.

Response: pleasure

Situation: feeding

Objective: The child will communicate to the adult to feed him his favorite food, indicating desire by movement.

Procedure:

1. The teacher is feeding the child hand over hand, from behind, child's favorite food.
2. The teacher pauses.
3. The teacher keeps hand over child's hand on the table.
4. The teacher waits for child to initiate movement of his/her hand under adult's hand.

STRATEGY NUMBER 5

Description of child: hearing child.

Stimulus: music from headset on child.

Response: pleasure from situation.

Situation: child is enjoying music wearing headset.

Objective: for child to manipulate adult to put headset on.

Procedure:

1. Child is permitted to wear headset, enjoying music (sound.)
2. Teacher removes headset and puts it in child's lap. This is done hand over hand.
3. The teacher pauses at child's lap.
4. The teacher puts headset on child, hand over hand.
5. The child is permitted to wear headset and enjoy sound.
6. The teacher removes headset from child, hand over hand, and places in lap.
7. The teacher waits for motor response indicating desire for headset to be replaced.

LEVEL IV
THE CHILD WHO PUSHES AND PULLS WITH SITUATIONAL CUES

The child functioning at Level IV is beginning to communicate a variety of needs and interests to other people. However, this communication occurs only when the child is in the presence of the need filling item — to remind him of his need, so to speak. For example, he will communicate hunger *only* in the presence of food, or other concrete items associated with eating. (If the child indicates a desire for an object *not within* his range of perception, he is functioning above Level IV.) Likewise the child at Level IV communicates only by manipulating someone else. He will push or pull someone toward what is desired for example, or place the person's hands on it.

To determine if a child is functioning at this level, place within his perception an object which you know he desires but which he cannot obtain unassisted. Note if, and how, he indicates his desire for the object. (Note also if he ever communicates desire for an object not within his perception.)

In training children who function at Level IV, the instructional objective is to enable them to indicate desire for an item which is *outside* the range of their perceptions.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS NUMBER I

General Goal: Be aware of the child's feelings. Enable him to associate a feeling or need with a signal or gesture that will remind him in another context.

1. Enable the child to be aware of his needs and desires in a situational context of satisfaction of the need.
2. Pair a signal or gesture within a particular context so that the child will associate it with the need outside the context.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS NUMBER II

Enable the child to be aware of his needs and desires when he is away from a particular situation. To accomplish this goal, the teacher will consistently pair a signal with a particular situation. The signal will be whatever is meaningful to the individual child. The child will learn to associate this signal with his feeling so that when he is away from the situation he will have something to help him remember what he should do in order to get help.

For example, when the child is at the table, the teacher will consistently give a signal for hungry just before the child takes a bite. The next step will be to give the signal for hungry just before the child sits down to eat. The following step is to give the signal just before the child washes his hand in preparation for lunch. Each step is then further removed from the actual presence of food. When the child goes to the adult for food in a situation removed from food, he has shown progress, and achieved the instructional objective.

This strategy can be used for many other feelings and desires including:

feeling cold
tired
thirsty
needing to go to the bathroom
wanting to jump on the trampoline
wanting visual stimulation
tactual stimulation
auditory stimulation

Especially Important:

1. Identification of the child's needs
2. The use of a schedule to assist the teacher in anticipating the child's needs and teaching a signal.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS NUMBER III

General Goal: Enable the child to look for an object that is not directly perceived, visually, tactually, and/or auditorily.

To accomplish this goal, the teacher can play hide-and-seek games of sequential complications using objects, persons, etc., that are highly motivating to the child.

For example, the teacher may place a lighted flashlight underneath a blanket and guide the child, in order to help him find it. When the child *initiates* the search himself he has shown progress. The next step may be turning out the flashlight before hiding it — or letting the child watch you put it under an opaque box. Each succeeding step would be further removed, so the child will eventually think of the flashlight when it is out of his presence and he seeks help to search for it.

This strategy of teaching object permanence can be used for teaching the child to look for:

a direct sensory stimulus
light, food,
an object
a person
to satisfy his needs or desires.

Remember:

1. Feel and recognize the child's needs and desires.
2. Use a schedule.
3. Use gestures.

STRATEGY NUMBER 1 (Toilet)

Note: Although the adult uses a signal, the child need not.

a. While the child is on the toilet, consistently present an appropriate sign, gesture, picture, etc.

b. Outside of situation, give the same gesture, word, sign, picture as a situational cue.

c. When the child responds by giving the gesture, word, sign, picture outside the situation, he has progressed. Likewise, if he takes the adult or goes by himself.

STRATEGY NUMBER 2 (Eating)

a. While the child is at the table, present the symbol for hungry just before he eats a bite and just before sitting down to eat.

b. Before lunch, away from the situation give the gesture for hungry and then sign for eat paired with the words.

c. When the child responds by giving the gesture or sign for hungry or eat *outside* the situation, he has progressed. Likewise, if he responds to the presentation of the sign, gesture, picture, etc., by taking the adult to the table, he has achieved the objective.

STRATEGY NUMBER 3 (Hide and Seek)

a. When the child is in the presence of a light, shiny object, food, etc. and he shows some interest in it or desire for it . . .

b. The teacher covers the light, hides the toy, the food, etc.

c. When the child finds the light, the toy, food, etc. he has met the objective.

STRATEGY NUMBER 4 (Gross Motor)

Create a Need! Don't Over Anticipate!

a. In the presence of the trampoline the child takes off shoes and pulls adult to it.

The teacher gives a gesture, sign, etc., in the presence of the trampoline.

b. Outside the gym, the teacher gives the gesture, sign, for the trampoline and then takes the child to it.

c. When the child responds by getting the adult to take him to the trampoline, by making the gesture, or by going himself, he has satisfied the objective.

Note: Similar strategies may be utilized in enabling the child to communicate that:
he is cold (Strategy #5)
he is tired (Strategy #6)
he is thirsty (Strategy #7)
he desires visual stimulation (Strategy #8)
he desires tactual stimulation (Strategy #9)

LEVEL V
THE CHILD WHO PUSHES AND PULLS WITHOUT SITUATIONAL CUES

The communication behavior of the child at Level V is characterized by indications of desire for objects *outside* the child's range of perception. As in Level IV however, the primary mode of communication involves pushing and/or pulling others toward the desired object. An example of a child at this level is one who takes an adult by the hand and leads him to another room in which there is a toy he desires. Because the child is communicating a desire for something which he cannot simultaneously perceive, Level V behaviors are less concrete than the previous levels.

The instructional objective for language development for the child functioning at Level V is to enable him to demonstrate his knowledge of the functions of objects by using them appropriately and in a *complex* manner.

Description of the Child functioning at Level V:

1. Has some degree of inner language.
2. Has some orientation, mobility, and memory.
3. Recognizes routine and is beginning to anticipate.
4. Has some degree of a self-concept.
5. Is functioning at about a 2+ year level.

STRATEGY NUMBER 1

Objective: The child will demonstrate "representational play."

Activity: Direct the child in preparing a "simple" food (for example, instant pudding or jelly sandwich). Then present him with toy versions of the utensils involved and direct him in a re-enactment of the food preparation activity. Repeat frequently and consistently. Ocassionally present the toy utensils without directing the child in their use; when the child initiates appropriate use of the toys, he has achieved the objectives.

STRATEGY NUMBER 2

Objective: The child will dress a doll correctly.

Activity: Frequently direct a child in dressing a doll. It may help if this shortly follows his own getting dressed. Ocassionally present the doll and clothes without giving direction in their use. If the child tries, unassisted, to dress the doll, he has achieved the objective.

STRATEGY NUMBER 3

Objective: The learner will use a "tool" to get a desired object off a high shelf.

Activity: "Show" the learner an object in which it is known he has great interest and then place it out of reach, but where it can be perceived. Show him how he can use a yardstick to get the object off the shelf. Repeat the activity frequently but use different "tools": a broom handle, pipe, board, etc. Occasionally structure the setting without giving the child assistance in identifying and utilizing the tool. If the child identifies and utilizes the tool successfully and without assistance, he has achieved the objective.

STRATEGY NUMBER 4 (Vocabulary)

Task: To pair the sign with the object towards which the child is pushing or pulling the teacher.

Teacher Behavior:
1. must remember to present the sign,
2. wait from response from child,
3. may be necessary to prompt child.

Child Behavior:
1. must attempt to respond to teacher's sign,
2. may approximate or gesture.

STRATEGY NUMBER 5 (Mobility)

Task: To increase the child's total independence through orientation to his environment.

Teacher Behavior:
1. be sure basic concept is firmly established (i.e. "drink"),
2. involve the child in the entire process (i.e. bring child with you to retrieve cups before setting up table for his "drink.")

STRATEGY NUMBER 6 (Total Communication)

Task: To use as many avenues as possible to expand concepts (i.e. — matching sorting.)

Child Behavior:
1. child must attend
2. child must show interest

Teacher Behavior:
1. begin with basic needs
2. present physical object, location, picture, sign, word

STRATEGY NUMBER 7 (Imitation of Motor Movements)

Task: To teach the child to imitate more accurately through gross and fine motor and finger dexterity.

Child Behavior:

1. must focus on teacher
2. must interact

Teacher Behavior: define skills to be taught.

STRATEGY NUMBER 8 (Socialization)

Task: To increase awareness of social and routine matters through the use of on-campus trips. Begin with short trips in the immediate school environment *outside the classroom* (i.e. — offices, other classrooms) and move to on-campus outdoors trips (grass, rain, snow).

STRATEGY NUMBER 9 (Socialization)

Task: To make the child aware of and to cause his interaction with classmates, peers, etc.
(Example — Good-morning greeting)

STRATEGY NUMBER 10 (Socialization)

Task: To increase awareness of social and routine matters through the use of field trips to the larger community (i.e., bakery, public transportation, physical walking).

STRATEGY NUMBER 11 (Pre-Vocational Skills)

Task: To initiate simple pre-vocational skills (i.e. screwing nuts or bolts). Must be realistic in terms of moving from one level to next (i.e. — peg boards to nails in board).

LEVEL VI
THE CHILD WITH INNER LANGUAGE

"Inner Language" is a term which is interpreted and used in many different ways. Here, we are intending to denote a hypothetical construct for explaining certain observable activities. These activities are so complex in nature that they usually involve a chain or series of behaviors. Because of the complexity of the behavior it can be inferred that they are the result of a "thought" or "inner language" process on the part of the child.

The child who responds to hunger by going into the kitchen and preparing a sandwich can be said to be displaying the complex behavior of the child at Level VI. Similar is the child who "collects" from various cupboards the ingredients for a particular desired dish and takes them to an adult.

"Representational Play" is a behavior which implies inner language. In this case the child would be reenacting an event in which he has participated elsewhere. A frequently seen example is the child who "prepares" a meal using toy utensils. Another example is the child who dresses and feeds a doll, thereby showing his realization that the doll represents a person.

Another example of inner language is problem solving. A child who desires something on a shelf which he cannot reach and moves a piece of furniture to stand on to reach it (or "invents" a tool to reach it) could be said to be demonstrating inner language as we are using it here.

Behaviors demonstrating inner language need not be solitary, although they often are. The child who plays with another — re-enacting a school activity, for example — can be said to be exhibiting inner language.

The child who demonstrates *any* of these behaviors, or ones similar in nature, would be functioning at least at Level VI. Level VI differs greatly from the other levels in the following ways:

1. Although the other levels overlap somewhat, Level VI can possibly overlap several levels. Consequently, it is difficult to conceptualize Level VI in a hierarchial sequence. Developmentally, however, these behaviors most frequently occur between the behaviors we have labeled as characteristic of Levels V and VII.

2. Level VI behaviors are basically resultant from an internal function, whereas the other levels address themself more towards active behaviors.

3. Level VI behaviors less frequently involve interaction with another person. The development of this level, however, is a crucial step in the language development process and is a prerequisite to symbolic communication. In effect, Level VI serves as the bridge from concrete to more abstract modes of communicating.

4. Level VI behaviors are much more complex than those at previous levels. Usually a number of behaviors occur one after another, resulting in a complex activity.

The general goal of instructional strategies for the child functioning at Level VI is to develop communicative behaviors which do not involve direct contact with the item which the communication is intended to convey.

Teacher's Role:

1. To provide a structured class setting.

   a. Room setting remains constant (placement of furniture, etc.)
   b. Each activity has a fixed area and fixed time.
   c. *Ideally* same teacher is with the same child in the same place at the same time.

2. To present language (verbally and/or gesture) for an activity or item consistently.

3. To provide positive reinforcement for a child.

Objectives:

1. To have the child display:

   a. Independence
   b. Understanding of specific task and functions of objects.
   c. Understanding of a routine.
   d. Representational Play.

2. To increase the child's self-motivation.

3. To enable the child to gesture and point to indicate his desires.

STRATEGY #1

Objective: The child will independently get his snack tray when presented with the appropriate gesture or sign.

Activity: The teacher presents child with the tray and the gesture or sign for tray and goes through all the motions involved with the child.

STRATEGY NUMBER 2

Objective: When on the toilet, the learner will demonstrate his recognition of the sign or gesture for "finished," by moving away from the toilet.

Activity:
1. Teacher presents sign for toilet and takes the child to the bathroom.
2. He waits for the child then indicates to the child that he's finished and "It's time to go."
3. Through patterning, the teacher would expect the child to move away or in some manner indicate that he is finished.

STRATEGY NUMBER 3

Objective: The child will point toward an object which he desires.

Pre-requisites: The child has achieved Level VI, including the ability to attend to a person and or an object, and the ability to imitate.

Procedure:

1. Present an object which the child desires.
2. Place it within his perception but out of reach.
3. Place the child's arm in a pointing position.
4. Reinforce by giving the object to the child.
5. Repeat steps 1-4 frequently and in a variety of contexts and using a variety of desired objects.
6. Occasionally do not position the child's arm in a pointing position. If he points to the object independently, he has achieved the objective.

STRATEGY NUMBER 4

Objective: The learner will use a gesture to indicate his desire for an object.

Considerations: Begin with gestures related to items for which it is known the child has a preference and/or related to the child's daily needs and activities. The movements should be individually suited to the learner. Optimally they will be gestures which he has developed himself. If not, they should not be new movements for him. These gestures need *not* be related to conventional signs although it is possible that they would be similar. (If not confusing to the child, the gestures may be paired with conventional signs, in order to facilitate the child's advancement.)

Suggestions for gestures follow. Remember, if any of these are selected, to tailor them to the individual child.

for stand, upward pressure on shoulders.
for sit, downward pressure
for eat, tapping the mouth with the hand
toilet, tapping the crotch area
go, slight forward push
ball, throwing or bouncing motion
doll, rocking arm movement
trampoline, jumping up and down
cold, shivering movement
undress, pulling at clothes
noise, hands over ears

Procedure:

1. Guide the child in making the gesture in an appropriate situation.
2. Repeat frequently and consistently
3. Teach more than one gesture at a time.
4. Occasionally, when in the appropriate situation, do not guide the child in making the gesture. If he makes the gestures spontaneously in appropriate situations, he has achieved the objective.

STRATEGY NUMBER 5

Objective: The learner, by using a vocalization, will get another person's attention.

Pre-requisite: The child vocalizes (including crying) spontaneously and randomly.

Procedure: Conseqate vocalization by going to the child and reinforcing him. Do this frequently and consistently. After a reasonable training period, do not go to the child if he vocalizes; if his vocalization persists, he has achieved the objective.

LEVEL VII
THE CHILD WHO POINTS AND GESTURES

The child at Level VII communicates his desires to others through the utilization of concrete symbols, so to speak. He uses non-standard signals and gestures which, while not requiring direct contact with his "topic" directly represent it. For example, if a child at Level VII wanted to communicate "ball," he might point toward it, or make a throwing or bouncing motion. These gestures are concrete in that they directly represent the topic communicated (e.g. a throwing motion is obviously related to a ball); but they are also abstract in that the child does not need the presence of the object in order to convey his message.

At Level VII the child is using a form of symbol to communicate *but* the "symbols" have an obvious relationship to the object or concept represented. The child at this level might point to his mouth to indicate a desire for food; he might jump up and down to communicate a desire to use a trampoline; or he might communicate thirst by making a drinking movement with his hand.

The representations that a child at this level would use are ones that he has developed himself or ones which he has been taught by others who have designed them to fit into his unique repetoire of behaviors. If they are similar to the sign used in a more formal system of communication, this is coincidental. The criterion for Level VII is that the child communicates using representational gestures; whether the gestures are standard or not is irrelevant. The child at Level VII has the *concept* of representational communication but does not have the *system* for communication, he is said to exhibit "proto-symbolic" behaviors. Another facet of proto-symbolic communication behavior is the use of vocal "call sounds" — utterances intended to attract the attention of another person.

The general instructional goal for the child at Level VII is that he begin to use a systematic mode of communicating.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Review primary goal, i.e. to progress from Level VII to VIII.
2. Evaluate gestures or sounds and comprehension behavior.
3. Establish realistic goals; define terminal behavior.
4. Plan of action
   a. Accept exhibited behavior — support for consistency at this level.
   b. Show correct sign or sound
5. Draw up list of basic signs.
6. Keep cumulative data.
7. Use positive and negative reinforcement — including facial, eye contact and body language.
8. Use positive and negative reinforcement consistently to shape proper forms of expression.
9. Manipulate the learner's environment to cause a specific need.
10. Use imitative motor for acquiring child's attending behavior or eye contact (preparing child for a specific task).
11. Support and insure consistency of gestures for a specific need and introduce new environmental situations while consistently supporting gestures while introducing a sign in a new environment.
12. Do not accept lower levels of expression.
13. Co-act signs until they are performed independently.
14. Offer the child choices — first by pointing, then by introducing, and then gradually proceeding to use of the sign.

15. Support the team approach: school personnel; parents; all those in contact with the child should form signs precisely.
16. Encourage expression.
17. Pantomime play using and incorporating signs with gestures.
18. Remember that comprehension of a sign or word must precede its use!
19. Signs to be learned may be paired with previously used gestures.

STRATEGY NUMBER 1

Objective: The child will respond to the following signed/spoken sentences by performing the appropriate activity:

Give me the.....
It's time for lunch.
Put on your coat.

Activity: Begin by showing the child the signs for the objects to be given, lunch, and coat, frequently and in connection with the objects they represent. When the learner begins responding (as a result of association) to the single sign, the entire sentence should be presented.

STRATEGY NUMBER 2

Objective: The learner will use the sign/word for various presented objects when asked "what?"

Activity: Child must first comprehend the sign/word for the object as in strategy #1 above. Present the object, sign what, manipulate the child to make the sign for the object (a model may be provided), and reinforce the child. Repeat this activity frequently; as the learner begins to make an association between the object and its symbol, gradually reduce the amount of prompting necessary to elicit the sign.

This activity may be expanded to teach other responsive behaviors. For example: "What are you doing?" "Playing, etc. Remember that is is unnatural for a learner to habitually identify an object with no stimulus other than its presence.

LEVEL VIII
THE CHILD WHO USES SIGNS

The child at Level VIII is actually using formal (more or less) signs or words on a consistent basis. However, generally speaking he signs/speaks in only one-or two-word "phrases," and, to him these symbols "are" what they represent. For example, the child at Level VIII would respond to the symbol for stop by stopping immediately, rather than, more appropriately completing the task (crossing the street, for example.) Many symbols also, may have meaning for him in only a few contexts.

The child at Level VIII — unless consciously taught otherwise — will have a considerably larger receptive than expressive vocabulary. That is, he understands many more symbols than he uses. The words and signs he does use are related to "here and now" experiences.

Instructional strategies for the child at Level VIII should be oriented toward the objectives of increased sentence and phrase length, increased receptive and expressive vocabularies, and increased general fluency. The child should begin to use his vocabulary (spoken and/or signed) in a more symbolic manner, to begin to understand "multiple meanings" for words, and to use them in a variety of contexts. He will begin to demonstrate awareness — through appropriate vocabulary usage — of abstract concepts regarding emotions, time, quantity, position in space, etc.

STRATEGY NUMBER 1

Objective: The child will use familiar vocabulary (spoken and/or signed) in other than familiar contexts.

Activities: Provide experiences in a variety of situations. Communicate to the child and elicit responses from him regarding the experiences.

STRATEGY NUMBER 2

Objective: The child will communicate outside the classroom, particularly at home and in his dormitory.

Activities: Provide classes in *total* communication for parents and houseparents, emphasizing vocabulary relevant to the *child's* activities. Observe parent-child communication and provide appropriate feedback.

STRATEGY NUMBER 3

Objective: The child will combine two or more words to form a sentence or "thought group," and will sequence them correctly.

Activities: Communicate to the child by using a consistent sentence structure. Reinforce correct usage.

If he uses telegraphic speech ("want eat," for example) repeat his thought in a complete sentence ("I want to eat.") When he expresses an idea, expand his thoughts by adding new information. ("I want to eat *lunch*.") It is important that the reinforcement for increased sentence length be more reinforcing than the feedback and assistance (prompting) you give. Be certain that the child understands new vocabulary and phrases of increased length *before* eliciting new words and longer phrases from him.

STRATEGY NUMBER 4

Objective: The child will follow directions.

Activities: "Practice" running errands. Start with simple commands, e.g. "Give this to him." Later, as the child "catches on," make the requests more and more complex and actually involving a sequence of commands, e.g. "Take the book to your room, put it on the table, and bring me back a toy."

STRATEGY NUMBER 5

Objective: Through appropriate consistent responses, the learner will demonstrate his comprehension of symbols for abstract concepts.

Activities: Provide appropriate language (capsulize, using the child's vocabularly) during actual experiences involving such abstracts as emotions and time. Associate the vocabulary of abstracts with pictures and storytelling. Assist the child in relating experiences by providing the vocabularly for the emotions he is demonstrating.

STRATEGY NUMBER 6

Objective: Through appropriate usage the child will demonstrate his understanding of a "question and answer" format.

Activities: Provide a model for the child. Ask questions of a child who will respond appropriately — be certain that the learner is attending. Reverse the process by becoming the respondent. Then attempt the same procedure with the learner to determine if he has grasped the concept.

LEVEL IX
THE CHILD WHO USES PRE-ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

The child at Level IX is using language in a truly symbolic manner. He fluently uses symbols which have no concrete relationship to the concepts being symbolized. This symbol system would involve sign language and/or speech, as well as beginning recognition of some fingerspelling and/or reading of print or Braille.

The completely symbolic nature of the communicative behavior typical of this level is the primary distinction between Level IX and lower levels. The child uses nouns, pronouns, verbs, and some adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions. He uses articles with increased regularity and average sentence length is 4-6 words. He follows up to three-stage commands and may have an expressive vocabularly of over 1500 words, and a receptive vocabularly of over 2500 words.

Although the child at Level IX recognizes some fingerspelling, printed, and/or braille words, he perceives them as a one symbol and does not recognize that they are composed of smaller units. Typical of this level is a child who does have a sight word reading vocabulary but who does not have the skills to analyze and identify newly presented words. Consequently, the use of the forms of fingerspelling, print, and/or braille is very limited at this level. The learner at Level IX is not yet able to group and classify objects except in terms of very obvious concrete variables; nor is he able to sort and classify information. He does not fully correctly use the symbols for such concepts as half, different, few, and fourth. He is inconsistent in his use of verb tenses.

In effect, the child at Level IX is between levels; his high degree of symbolism distinguishes him from children at lower levels, but his lesser fluency, flexibility and finesse of usage is not comparable to that of children at higher levels.

The orientation of instruction for children at this level should be similar to Level VIII, except "more of it." The development of reading and writing skills should be a priority at this level. A "readiness" component should be included if necessary. Strong emphasis, also, should be placed on concept development and comprehension of finer shades of meaning.

Through the example of one concept — time to eat — the following is given as a paradigm for increased linguistic fluency and concept comprehension.

This is the "unit approach." A variety of objectives are achieved through a number of lessons regarding a particular topic. The topic in this case is "Eating."

Instructor Prerequisites:

1. Determine how much the child already knows about what you are planning to teach him.
2. Talk and sign in the level that you want the child to use.
3. Use language in *all* contexts.
4. *Consistency* is the "word" in teaching a child at this level.

Objective: Through the use of appropriate language the child will demonstrate his ability to communicate, in complete sentences, comprehension of the significance of time, and ability to predict based on understanding of cause-effect relationships. (This objective is related only to this particular example. The following procedure may be utilized in achieving a variety of objectives for the child at Level IX.)

Materials: A clock fixed at 12 o'clock. Photographs of different groups eating (the learner's class, family, other school groups, etc.)

A printed or brailled sentence: It is time to eat.

Learner Prerequisites: Attending behavior; use of symbols for time and eat; concept of a daily schedule; sequential memory; recognition and recall.

Concepts to be taught:

1. Who, what, where, when, and why?

   Where do you eat?
   What do you eat?
   Where is your milk?
   What color is your food?
   Is it hot or cold?

2. Use of verbs, prepositions, adjectives, and pronouns.

3. Increased language usage — improved sentence structure and increased vocabulary — through visual, oral, graphic, and tactile experiences.

4. Concepts of sweet and sour. For example:

   It is candy. It is sweet.
   How does the candy taste?
   What is sweet?
   Give me the sweet one?
   Give me all the sweet ones?

5. Vocabulary of setting a table, preparing a meal, etc.

6. Concepts of Hot and Cold.

7. "New" grammatical forms.

   Do you think it is sweet? (question)
   It is going to be hot. (progressive tense)
   They were cooked yesterday. (passive voice)

Other concepts around which "units" could be built are weather and temperature; physical feelings; emotions; season and holidays, time; body parts; clothing; family; school; community; buying and selling; money; weight; numbers; texture; space; sex education; self concept; and many, many others.

LEVEL X
THE CHILD WHO USES ACADEMIC LANGUAGE BUT HAS LANGUAGE PROBLEMS

The child at Level X uses language with a high degree of fluency and flexibility; he does, however, have certain *specific* language disabilities and/or deficits. These shortcomings are the *only* barriers to optimum communication in the child's particular modality. His communication is adequate but imperfect enough to sometimes cause confusion. Level X is not a level an instructor would ordinarily try to achieve — he would like to avoid language problems. It should be recognized, however, that, in spite of the best teachers, learners usally pass through a stage of "linguistic confusion" prior to achieving mastery. Occasionally, too, a learner will not be capable of attaining linguistic mastery, and the instructor should realize that Level X is a realistic final objective for some learners.

Generally speaking, the language problems evidenced at Level X may be of two types. (A particular learner may exhibit one or both.):

1. *Concept Deficits.* The child may not understand the complete meaning of certain concepts and may use some words incorrectly. "Hammers for Education," for example, does not convey the meaning of "Tools for Learning."

   This may include deficits in grammatical concepts. For example, if the child's concept of pluralization is incomplete he may not comprehend collective nouns, or might form all plurals according to only one or two rules.

2. *Language Disabilities.* These are specific dysfunctions often called learning disabilities, but here, of course, restricted to language usage.

Generally speaking, teacher observation and the administration of such instruments as the ITPA or Englemann's *Basic Concept Inventory* are useful in determining if a child has such language problems and, if so, their nature.

The general instructional objective for the learner at Level X is optimum conventional use of language.

General Considerations:

Referral:

If necessary refer the child to a qualified speech therapist or specialist in language disorders for therapy.

Coordinate:

Coordinate the program so that everyone dealing with the child on a daily basis will try to incorporate the therapeutic suggestions.

The fluency of the child at Level X includes not only understanding and use of speech and/or sign language but, as well, fingerspelling, braille and/or print.

MODE:

Use the mode of communication the individual can use with greatest ease. Work on remediating other sensory channels but also allow communication to continue. Possible channels include:

visual — auditory — kinesthetic
visual — kinesthetic
visual — vocal
kinesthetic — kinesthetic
auditory — vocal
auditory — kinesthetic

GENERALIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE:

Do not assume carryover. Be sure to relate specifically-learned skills to practical experience and be aware that transfer of knowledge *must* take place. Generalize a specific task. Use the child's own experiential background to plan the program.

UTILIZATION OF TASK ANALYSIS.

The teacher must be aware of the sequence of learning.

INSTRUMENTS.

Utilize specially developed instruments for Psychoeducational testing such as:

ITPA
Frostig Materials
Slingerland
Newlands Test for Learning Disabilities
Southern California Sensory Integration Test

EXAMPLES OF DISORDERS ARE:

dyslexia, disnomia and anomia

THESE MAY BE CHARACTERIZED BY:

mixing letters in a word
mixing words and phrases
timing is off
tense problems
figure-ground problems
lost in time during the day — does not know what comes next in the sequential order

Strategies for sensory-motor breakdown.

Analyze the child and find out what channel is breaking down. Part of the remediative program may include:

STRATEGY NUMBER 1

Games for Body Awareness

— what do I put in a shoe, etc.
— Simon says
— work on crossing the midline
— left-right
— imitative — verbal and non-verbal

References: Kephart: *The Slow Learner in the Classroom*
Ferth *et al: Piaget in the Classroom*

STRATEGY NUMBER 2 (Specific sequencing)

auditory sequential — i.e. hit drum 3 times — imitate
visual sequential — i.e. draw line 3 times — imitate
kinesthetic sequential — i.e. touch child 3 times — imitate
— child must imitate pattern
— use all sensory channels
— increase pattern in length and difficulty
— what's missing — present objects with part missing
— use object and increase the sophistication of the pattern
— adjust the length of time and specific pattern is shown
— use Developmental Learning Materials for sequential learning

Find outcome: Child's language behavior should improve.

STRATEGY NUMBER 3

Objective: The child will demonstrate his comprehension of the concept of "shop" by responding to — and using it himself — its symbol, accurately in a variety of contexts and although it has various meanings.

Consider the various implications of the symbol "shop" in the following phrases:
— sheltered work shop
— closed shop
— barber shop
— dress shop
— repair shop
— just shopping around
— shopping for shoes
— industrial arts shop
— language development workshop
— print shop
— Gimbel's gourmet shop
— set up shop
— talk shop

— shop lift
— shoppe
— shopworn
— shopping center
— shopper's special (a bus or a bargain?)

The barriers to communication, if one does not comprehend all of the variations of this term, are many. Imagine for example, the confusion of someone with the concept of "shop" as a kind of building, when confronted with the term shoplifting!

Procedures: Provide a variety of experiences related to the contexts in which "shop" has different meanings. Use the term frequently and appropriately. When the learner appears to comprehend by responding appropriately, elicit appropriate usage from him. The key here is *experience;* language is best understood and utilized if based on meaningful actual experiences.

Discuss situations in which the term shop is not correct. For example, the learner could generalize that *a shop* is a small building where services or goods are purchased — *but,* he should realize that gas shop, hardware shop, and doctor shop are not often used and "grocery shop" is an activity not a building. In these instances provide the child with the correct vocabularly, as well as the "not instances" of "shop."

Of vital importance is providing a good model.

STRATEGY NUMBER 4

Objective: The learner will use the grammatical passive voice correctly on a consistent, spontaneous basis. He will demonstrate it in all tenses and with a wide variety of verbs.

Procedures: Provide a good model. If the child communicates in the active voice a thought which is more adequately expressed in the passive voice, rephrase it for him, as per this example:

Learner: The clock moved back for day light savings time.

Instructor: The clock *was moved* back?

Learner: Yes, (and perhaps) it *was moved* back on Saturday.

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